

## Major Angelo

(Original.)

During my college days our family lived in Washington, and as they left it before the beginning and returned after the close of hot weather I was not there in vacations. During this period I understood that my sister had a love affair, but since she was older than I and I was at an age when neither my sympathy nor my judgment was in demand very little was said to me about the affair.

A few years later the Spanish-American war broke out, and I, being a lieutenant in the national guard, went out to fight the dons. In the very first encounter in which I took part I was wounded and taken prisoner. I had the good fortune to be located near one of the best Spanish hospitals, to which I was taken and treated with every attention. One morning the officer of the day went through the ward where I was lying in company with the surgeon. When the officer passed my bed I noticed that my face caught his attention. Indeed he stared at me as if he had known me before. The next day I received a basket of fruit to which was attached the card of Major Adelberto Angelo.

Major Angelo came to see me every day after that and loaded me with attentions. Naturally I became very fond of him. I endeavored to gain from him the cause of his having noticed me and of his attentions, but failed signally. He declared that it was the result of fancy. The intimacy lasted five weeks, at the end of which time I was discharged from the hospital and very soon after exchanged.

The next time I saw Angelo he was lying mortally wounded on the battlefield. We were pressing the Spaniards before Santiago, and having cleared a way directly in front of our regiment with a Gatling gun we pushed forward over a field. Stepping over what I supposed was a corpse, I glanced down to be sure that I should not touch it, and looked into the livid face of Major Angelo. It was not permissible for me to leave my company, but I did. Stooping, I raised his head. Angelo opened his eyes, and a loving smile told me that he recognized me. I saw him try to move his lips to speak, but the effort was a failure. Then he fell back—dead.

I went home, like most of my comrades, sick, but it was not long before I was on my feet again and joined the family in October in Washington. My sister had for some time been going into a decline, and my mother forbade me to excite her with accounts of my war experiences, especially my stay in hospital. When I went into Adele's room to greet her after my long and eventful absence, I was puzzled at the look she gave me. It was a hungry look, a look as if I might have news to tell her that she longed to hear. I was shocked at her appearance, and saw that she was doomed. She wished me to talk about the war, but I agreed with my mother that it would not be well to do so, and, though Adele kept turning to it, I held to other topics. Indeed, on account of my sister's condition, I was not asked to recount war's horrors, as most of my comrades were, and I was glad of it. Such experiences are more agreeable to the narrator when mellowed by distance, and in my case, with the shadow of death over us, I did not wish to dwell upon them.

One day I was sitting by Adele's bed chatting with her on ordinary topics when she said suddenly:

"You were wounded and taken to a hospital when you were in Cuba, weren't you?"

"Yes."

"And a Spaniard was very kind to you?"

"Yes. But you have heard nothing about it from me or from father or mother, because I have not told them a word about it. How did you?"

"Hush. Don't tell them that I mentioned it."

"But tell me!"

At the moment mother came into the room and broke in upon my question. The next time I was alone with Adele I endeavored to reopen the subject, but an expression passed over her face that warned me to desist, and I never referred to it again.

One evening between day and dark I was passing through the lower hall when I saw a figure of a man come in at the front door. Since his back was to the light, I could not see his face, but it was familiar. He appeared to be a gentleman and walked through the hall as if perfectly familiar with the premises. For this reason I did not regard him as a thief, but permitted him to go where he liked, following him from a distance. He mounted the staircase, and I noticed that though there was but the bare wood to walk on his step was so light that I did not hear it. He was considerably in advance of me and had turned and disappeared down the upper hall before I reached the top of the staircase. When I did reach it he was nowhere to be seen. He must have entered some room on that floor, and since Adele's was one of them I hurried to ascend it. Just before reaching her door, which stood open, I heard the word, "Come!"

Entering the room, the fading light streaming through a window showed me Major Angelo raising Adele in his arms. I passed my hands before my eyes to clear my vision, and when I reached down so I saw Adele lying alone, stiff and stark. She was dead.

A few days later my mother told me that Adele's affair of the heart was with Senator Adelberto Angelo, who was with her at the time an attaché of the Spanish and American legation. C. AUGUSTUS PORTER

## PULQUE MAGUEY.

The Plant From Which Mexico's National Drink is Made.

Pulque, which is the national drink of the Mexicans, is made from the sap of a giant species of agave, the fleshy leaves of which are sometimes nine feet long and weigh over a hundred pounds each. Each plant bears from twenty-five to fifty leaves around a massive fleshy base, and the largest ones weigh from one to two tons apiece.

This pulque maguey, as it is called, thrives best at a high altitude on the semiarid plains of the Mexican table lands. The valley of Mexico is the center of its cultivation, and many extensive plantations are devoted entirely to growing it, yielding large revenues to their owners. The plants when two or three years old are set out in long parallel rows and reach maturity in from twelve to fourteen years. In order to insure succession of harvests, new plantings are planted yearly.

The great fleshy leaves spend all the years of their immaturity in storing up quantities of sweet sap. At the expiration of this long interval, which might almost be called a period of incubation, a remarkable change occurs. The plant has then attained the supreme moment toward which all the boarding of sap during the past years has been directed, the character of its activity changes, and with marvelous rapidity a gigantic central flower stalk shoots up into the air from twenty to fifty feet.

The flower stalk, which is sometimes a foot in diameter at the bottom, is fed generously on the store of sap in the base and leaves. Its upper end throws out branches like a candelabrum and greenish white flowers spring forth in clusters. Humming birds, orioles and various kinds of insects also attracted by the nectar of the blossoms pass from plant to plant and thus insure fertilization. After the seeds form, the leaves and base, having exhausted themselves in this final effort, wither and die.

This is the ordinary course of procedure, but it would not suit the planter, who at the critical moment, when the maguey is on the point of sending up its flower stalk, cuts out the center of the plant, leaving a bowl shaped cavity, into which the stored sap runs. This sap, being fermented, is the pulque of commerce.

The value of the animal product of pulque runs up to millions of dollars. There is another kind of agave from which the Mexicans get a much more powerful alcoholic drink, known as mescal.

## The Celebrated Blarney Stone.

Five miles west of the city of Cork, where two streams meet, is the little valley of Blarney, with its castle. The fame of the castle is worldwide, for, high on the northeastern side of the building, is set the famous "blarney stone." It is said that the person adventurous enough to reach it and who has the faith to kiss it will henceforth have a wonderful gift. Honeyed words will flow from his lips, and persuasive powers will hang on his utterances. He will win his way anywhere and among all people simply because he has "kissed the blarney stone."

In order to be exact in the matter it is necessary to mention the fact that Blarney castle has two stones in its makeup each of which is claimed to be the real talisman. The one first mentioned above as being set on the northeastern wall of the building bears the date of erection of the castle, which is 1446. The other is on the roof. It is about two feet square and bears the date of 1703. In order to kiss the first mentioned stone the votary must be let down from the top of the building some twenty feet by means of ropes. This has the effect of making most every one believe or pretend to believe that the one on the roof, which is within easy access, is the true blarney stone.

## Ducks Afraid of the Dark.

The farmer was making his customary evening trip to the poultry yard with his lantern. "I can never understand why you do that," said his visitor from the city. "Will you please tell me why you leave the lantern burning there all night? I should think it would disturb the slumbers of the hens."

"Well, if I didn't leave it there you wouldn't get a mite of sleep all night," replied the farmer. "You see the lantern is for the ducks. They are the most timid creatures on earth. The minute it gets dark they begin to get frightened and then they set up an infernal noise. All night long they'd keep it up if it wasn't for the lantern. That seems to give them comfort and courage, and even then they're disturbed by any unusual noise. Talk about a watch dog! It isn't in it with a duck for arousing the family."—New York Press.

## Whistler and the Stars.

A new story of Whistler is recorded. The artist and a friend went for a walk along the Embankment one wonderfully starry night. Whistler had been in a very discontented mood all day and inclined to find fault with everything. Nothing pleased him; the houses were ugly, the river not what it might have been, the lights hard and glaring. His friend pointed out several things that appealed to him as beautiful, but the master would not give in.

"No," he said, "nature is only sometimes beautiful, only sometimes, very, very seldom indeed, and tonight she is, as so often, positively ugly."

"But the stars! Surely they are fine tonight?" urged the other.

Whistler looked up at the sky.

"Yes," he drawled, "they're not bad, but, my dear fellow, there's nothing in them."

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## Hospitality.

Dumas, the elder, had a dog as hospitable as his master, and this dog once invited twelve others to Monte Cristo, Dumas' palace, named after his famous novel. Dumas' factotum in chief wished to drive off the whole pack.

"Michael," said the great romancer, "I have a social position to sustain. It entails a fixed amount of trouble and expense. You say that I have thirteen dogs and that they are eating me out of house and home. Thirteen! What an unlucky number!"

"Monsieur—if you will permit—there is but one thing left to do. I must drive them all away."

"Never," Michael replied Dumas. "Never! Go at once and find me a fourteenth dog."

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Son. A coming city is saved by dynamite. Sometimes, a cough hangs on so long you feel as if nothing but dynamite would cure it. Z. T. Gray, of Calhoun, Ga., writes: "My wife had a very aggravated cough, which kept her awake nights. Two physicians could not help her; so she took Dr. King's New Discovery for Consumption, Cough, Croup, Whooping Cough, Sore Throat, etc., and was cured her." Strictly scientific cure for bronchitis and La Grippe. At Ed Greene's drug store, price 50c and \$1.00, guaranteed. Trial bottle free.

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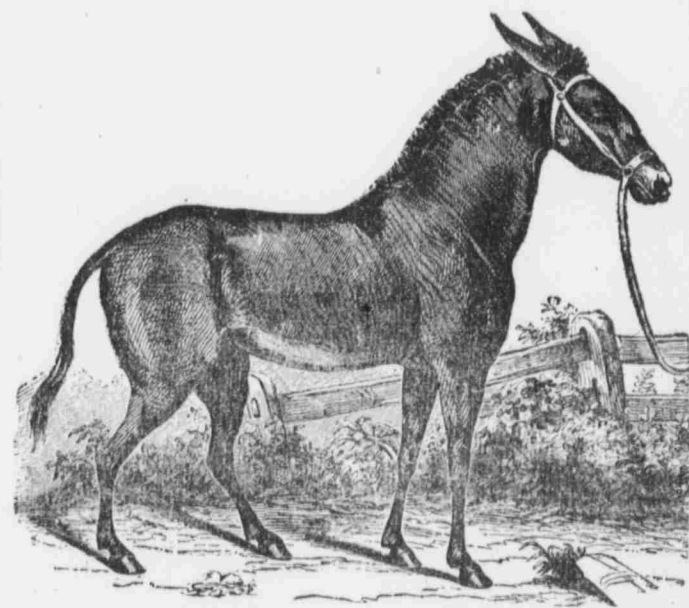
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